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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [IS KMDR MEDIA REACTION REPORT](#)  
SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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- [1](#). Mideast
- [2](#). Lebanon
- [3](#). European Union

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Key stories in the media:  
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All media reported on today's transition from Moshe Ya'alon to Dan Halutz in the position of IDF chief of staff. The media cited anger among right-wing politicians over Ya'alon's comment to Asharq Al-Awsat that Israel will be able to defend himself even if it leaves the Golan. Ya'alon was quoted as saying in an interview with Ha'aretz that unless Israel commits to further withdrawals after this summer's disengagement from Gaza, the pullout will be followed by an outbreak of renewed violence. Ya'alon also told Ha'aretz that any future Palestinian state would endanger the existence of Israel.

Yediot writes that the significance of the test of Iran's solid fuel missile Shihab-3 is that Israel will find it difficult to get warnings of launchings. The newspaper cites assessments in Israel that barring further developments, Iran will become a nuclear power in 2006.

Ha'aretz quoted sources in Jerusalem as saying Tuesday that the meeting between PM Sharon and PA Chairman [President] Mahmoud Abbas will not take place next week as planned. Abbas reportedly wished to meet Sharon in Cairo next Tuesday, and coordinated it with Egypt. Israel objected, insisting the two meet in Jerusalem. Israel also put off a meeting scheduled for today with PA officials, who were supposed to receive the list of properties Israel leaves in Gaza after the evacuation.

Leading media reported that on Tuesday, Attorney General Menachem Mazuz blasted the leaders of the opposition to the disengagement, accusing them of crossing red lines in their struggle to foil the Gaza pullout. The media quoted Mazuz as saying that 12th-grade students who blocked roads will not be allowed to take their matriculation tests.

Leading media reported that on Tuesday, PM Sharon's son, Likud MK Omri Sharon, who is the head of the parliamentary pro-environment lobby, proclaimed his opposition to the relocation of the Katif Bloc settlers in the dunes of Nitzanim -- a plan led by his father.

Maariv reported that senior Defense Ministry officials will soon sign a document of understanding with the U.S., according to which Israel will be able to export defense items to some countries only after it receives an authorization from the U.S. Defense Department. The newspaper quoted Israeli defense sources as saying that this is a real surrender and a renouncement of Israel's independence.

Ha'aretz and Hatzofe reported that the Yesha Council of Jewish Settlements in the Territories demanded Tuesday that veteran Israel TV anchorman Haim Yavin be fired over a documentary currently broadcast on Channel 2-TV, which slams Israel's policy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Leading media quoted Civil Service Commissioner Shmuel Hollander as saying Tuesday that people opposed to the investigation of Ambassador to the U.S. Danny Ayalon

are trying to intimidate him and his office.

Maariv and Jerusalem Post reported that the Foreign Ministry decided Tuesday to delay the return of Israel's ambassador to El Salvador as a protest against the inauguration of Yasser Arafat Plaza in San Salvador. However, Jerusalem Post quoted ministry sources as characterizing the overall relations between Israel and El Salvador as "very good."

A Yated Ne'eman headline reads: "Chirac Names Anti-American De Villepin Prime Minister."

Jerusalem Post bannered the 9-year jail sentence imposed Tuesday by a Moscow court on Jewish oil tycoon Michael Khodorkovsky. The newspaper quoted former cabinet minister Natan Sharansky as saying: "No doubt this sentence is selective punishment for political reasons." Sharansky indicated that anti-Semitism was also a factor in the affair.

Yediot reported that Col. Miri Regev will enter her post as IDF Spokeswoman today.

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**1. Mideast:**  
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Summary:  
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Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "It is easy for Bush to mortgage the American position on the permanent borders, wrapping it in different packaging for Israelis and for Palestinians."

Block Quotes:  
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"Three Permanent Agreements"

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (June 1): "It is easy for Bush to mortgage the American position on the permanent borders, wrapping it in different packaging for Israelis and for Palestinians. In so doing, he demonstrates involvement and accomplishment, fending off charges that he has washed his hands of the conflict. But the permanent-agreement talks are still far off, and it is doubtful they will come to fruition while he is still in office. In the meantime, the president makes do with Sharon's disengagement and Abbas's partial democratization, and soft pedals on the evacuation of settlement outposts and dismantling of the terror groups. These will wait for 'the day after' -- after the disengagement, and after both sides' elections."

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**2. Lebanon:**  
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Summary:  
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Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: "Trying to please everyone will only render [Saad] Hariri powerless and land him in trouble. He will never free himself or his country from Syrian hegemony if he turns a blind eye to Lebanon's south."

Block Quotes:  
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"Lebanon's Sovereignty"

Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (June 1): "The world this week cheered the successful completion of the first phase of Lebanon's modular parliamentary elections.... The triumph of the son of a slain leader -- anathema to Damascus --- seems to denote a further break from Syria and a reaffirmation of Lebanese sovereignty.... [After Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon five years ago,] Lebanon gave Hizbullah free reign and allowed it to amass even more lethal power, to the point that it now constitutes a strategic menace to Israel. Hariri's Jr.'s pronouncements on the issue a few days ago leave little room for optimism. Amazingly he told Newsweek that he could not disarm Hizbullah because 'part of Lebanon is still occupied' (the Sheba Farms). This flies directly in the face of the UN's determination of Israel's current border with Lebanon. Were Hizbullah to be disarmed, he postulated, the Lebanese army would have

to replace it 'in resisting Israeli occupation,' thereby escalating the danger of an Israeli-Lebanese war. Nevertheless, Hariri promised to parley with Hizbullah in an attempt to reach accord. Trying to please everyone will only render Hariri powerless and land him in trouble. He will never free himself or his country from Syrian hegemony if he turns a blind eye to Lebanon's south. If he chooses to hope for the best and avoid confrontation, his electoral success will prove to be yet another Levantine sham, a facade of progress concealing the same old quagmire."

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13. European Union:  
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Summary:  
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Independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized: "Sunday's vote in France constitutes fresh, additional proof of why Israel must not adopt this system."

Diplomatic correspondent Herb Keinon wrote on page one of conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: "An EU united by a constitution would -- at least politically -- mean ... a major force on the world scene that would, in a matter of time, see itself as America's equal on the international stage."

Chief Economic Editor and senior columnist Sever Plotker wrote in the editorial of mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot: "The results of the French referendum exposed in its frightening hideousness the gloomy wave of social nationalism that is submerging the European countries."

Block Quotes:  
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1I. "The Lessons of the Referendum"

Independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (June 1): "Whatever the reasons [of the French rejection of the European Union's constitutional treaty], the outcome was rejection of the goal of a 'United States of Europe,' and sanctification of the traditional value of the nation-state.... Additionally, France's pretensions to lead Europe, partly as a counterweight to Germany and partly alongside Germany as a counterweight to the Anglo-Saxon axis of Britain and the United States, have been badly damaged.... [Furthermore,] a 'no' vote can express anger at those in power and seizure of an opportunity to harass them, more than genuine opposition to the issue at hand.... As the evacuation [of settlements] draws nearer and the opposition to it increases, senior Likud officials are liable to revive the seemingly dead idea [of a referendum]. Sunday's vote in France constitutes fresh, additional proof of why Israel must not adopt this system."

II. "Weakened EU Is Nothing to Cry About in Jerusalem"

Diplomatic correspondent Herb Keinon wrote on page one of conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (June 1): "Last July, soon after the European Union angered Jerusalem by voting en masse against Israel at the UN on the security fence, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana visited Israel and said the EU cannot be ignored.... Solana's message to [Sharon] last year was 'too bad, we are here whether you like it or not.' It is likely, therefore, that the stinging rejection of the EU constitution in France on Sunday, and the likelihood that the Dutch will follow suit and vote no to the constitution in their referendum Wednesday, is not being lamented this week in the Prime Minister's Office.... A weaker EU is perceived in the current corridors of power to be in Israel's short-term interest -- although no one, for obvious reasons, will go on record saying this. Israel likes the current uni-polar world, where the U.S., led by a very friendly president and administration, calls the international shots.... An EU united by a constitution would -- at least politically -- mean a strengthened EU, a major force on the world scene that would, in a matter of time, see itself as America's equal on the international stage. A much-strengthened EU would indeed be able to demand a seat on near-equal footing with the U.S. around the Middle East negotiating table. Sharon doesn't want this to happen, but rather prefers the EU's 'junior partner' status. Sunday's French vote, moreover, put to rest any notion of the EU as a cohesive unit able to act by consensus. In various international forums, the EU's 'rule by consensus' redounds unfavorably for Israel."

### III. "The Alliance Between Nationalism and 'Leftism'"

Chief Economic Editor and senior columnist Sever Plotker wrote in the editorial of mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (May 31): "The proposed European constitution that was rejected Sunday by a sweeping majority of French citizens doesn't arouse passions.... However, it is a revolutionary constitution in the full sense of the word. It incorporates the first attempt in human history to design a common supra-national framework for millions of people -- members of various faiths, cultures and living standards. The Charter of Fundamental Rights included in Europe's Constitution is intended to grant all its residents joint constitutional and normative compasses and to allow them to live together in prosperity and mutual respect.... The results of the French referendum exposed in its frightening hideousness the gloomy wave of social nationalism that is submerging the European countries. It is not only the French president who has lost in the referendum over the European Constitution. It is not only the Euro that has been weakened. The vision of a borderless, hate-free, solidary, and united Europe that can say 'nevermore' has also receded by many years. The European retreat also concerns Israel. Not only is Israel close to Europe geographically. It also is the homeland of a people who has suffered more than any other people from European hatreds throughout generations."

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